

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 127

May 22, 1996, 11:28 a.m.
Page S-5470 Temp. Record

BUDGET RESOLUTION/Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)

SUBJECT: Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 1997-2002 . . . S. Con. Res. 57. Wellstone amendment No. 3988.

ACTION: AMENDMENT AGREED TO, 88-12

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. Con. Res. 57, the Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 1997-2002, will balance the Federal budget in fiscal year (FY) 2002 by slowing the overall rate of growth in spending over the next 6 years to below the rate of growth in revenue collections. The rate of growth in entitlements such as Medicare, Medicaid, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program, and the Earned Income Credit will be slowed. No changes will be made to the Social Security program, the spending for which will grow from \$348 billion in FY 1996 to \$467 billion in FY 2002. Defense spending will be essentially frozen at its present level.

The Wellstone amendment would express the sense of the Senate that the totals in this resolution assume that funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for FY 1997 will not be less than the funding provided for LIHEAP in FY 1996.

Those favoring the amendment contended:

The Wellstone amendment is short and to the point. It puts the Senate on record as being in favor of funding LIHEAP in FY 1997 at last year's level. Every year, we seem to have to go through a terrible fight just to make sure that people do not go cold in the United States of America. We are starting that fight early this year with the Wellstone amendment. We urge Senators to give it their support.

While favoring the amendment, some Senators expressed the following reservations:

(See other side)

YEAS (88)				NAYS (12)		NOT VOTING (0)	
Republican (41 or 77%)		Democrats (47 or 100%)		Republicans (12 or 23%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans (0)	Democrats (0)
Abraham	Hatfield	Akaka	Inouye	Brown			
Ashcroft	Hutchison	Baucus	Johnston	Coverdell			
Bennett	Jeffords	Biden	Kennedy	Faircloth			
Bond	Kempthorne	Bingaman	Kerrey	Gorton			
Burns	Lott	Boxer	Kerry	Gramm			
Campbell	Lugar	Bradley	Kohl	Helms			
Chafee	McCain	Breaux	Lautenberg	Inhofe			
Coats	McConnell	Bryan	Leahy	Kassebaum			
Cochran	Murkowski	Bumpers	Levin	Kyl			
Cohen	Pressler	Byrd	Lieberman	Mack			
Craig	Roth	Conrad	Mikulski	Nickles			
D'Amato	Santorum	Daschle	Moseley-Braun	Thomas			
DeWine	Shelby	Dodd	Moynihan				
Dole	Simpson	Dorgan	Murray				
Domenici	Smith	Exon	Nunn				
Frist	Snowe	Feingold	Pell				
Grams	Specter	Feinstein	Pryor				
Grassley	Stevens	Ford	Reid				
Gregg	Thompson	Glenn	Robb				
Hatch	Thurmond	Graham	Rockefeller				
	Warner	Harkin	Sarbanes				
		Heflin	Simon				
		Hollings	Wellstone				
			Wyden				

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

This budget resolution already assumes LIHEAP will receive as much funding in FY 1997 as it did in FY 1996. Therefore, considering this amendment is a waste of time. Still, because it does nothing more than express support for something that is already assumed in the resolution, we will vote in favor of its adoption.

Those opposing the amendment contended:

There is nothing quite so permanent as a temporary Federal agency. LIHEAP was created in 1981 in response to a fuel crisis that was causing prices to go through the roof and in response to the high inflation rates of the Carter years. With prices of all goods rising rapidly, and with the price of fuel rising even more rapidly, Congress acted to bring energy relief to the poor, especially the elderly poor who were hardest hit because they were on fixed incomes. Those days are long gone. Fuel is cheaper in real terms now than at most times in history, and inflation is very low, but people have gotten used to these LIHEAP handouts from the Federal Government and they do not want to give them up. We say that the need for this program is gone, and it should therefore be abolished. We know we are in the minority, but we oppose this amendment.